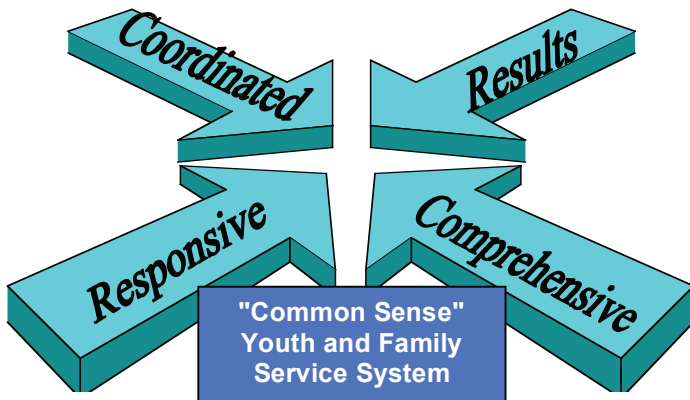


MONROE COUNTY I.C.P.

What is Integrated County Planning?

In 1998 Monroe County initiated **Phase I** of *Youth 2000*, an ambitious **long-term** integrated planning effort to improve outcomes for all children, youth and families. The *Youth 2000 Team* is building the vision and foundation necessary for a *common sense* youth and family service system that is responsive, comprehensive, coordinated and based on results. Beginning with the Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau and the Monroe County Department of Social Services, the *Team* is designing a multi-phased plan to integrate multiple planning efforts within the framework of the strengths, assets, resources and needs of our youth, families and communities.



A comprehensive approach to improving outcomes for youth and families includes recognizing, promoting and supporting healthy behaviors and beliefs while focusing resources on priority needs. The *Youth 2000 Team* is drawing from Search Institute's *Assets Approach* and *Healthy Communities, Healthy Youth*, and Developmental Research & Program's *Communities That Care* community building and prevention research. These strategies and approaches will help community members, human service providers and planners build a *common sense* system that is responsive to clients, willing to partner with community members, consistently child and family focused and strength-based across multiple supports and services and grounded in research-based effective models and strategies. The *common sense* system focuses on developing communities and youth and preventing problems rather than

Long Term Goals for Monroe County Youth and Family Services

Responsive

- ☐ Youth, parents and other stakeholders identify priority needs
- ☐ The system seeks and utilizes input on improving access to services and reducing confusion
- ☐ The needs and strengths of children, youth and families are recognized, understood and incorporated into planning, program development and service delivery
- ☐ Works with formal and informal linkages to "natural helping systems" that include faith communities, voluntary associations, neighbors and extended families.

Comprehensive

- ☐ Integrated County Planning is designed to improve outcomes for all children
- ☐ Operates from a foundation that seeks to enhance strengths and supports while targeting priority risks
- ☐ Utilizes a continuum of services from Community and Youth Development and Prevention through intensive Intervention and Treatment for individuals and families with all levels of need

Coordinated

- ☐ Services and programs are provided in a manner that is flexible, reduces gaps, fragmentation and duplication
- ☐ There are fewer structural barriers to navigate to obtain services from multiple sources
- ☐ There is effective and regular communication among multiple providers serving children, youth and families.

Based on Results

- ☐ Programs and services are accountable for results not only for what they do
- ☐ Programs and services—private and public--emphasize what works based on effectiveness research or on carefully testing new approaches

Youth 2000 Partners:

Rochester/Monroe County Youth Bureau
Monroe County Department of Social Services
Monroe County Office of Mental Health
Monroe County Health Department
Monroe County Department of Public Safety/Probation
City of Rochester

Using Asset Building and Risk Reduction Strategies To Meet The Needs of Children, Youth and Families

Youth Development is "the ongoing growth process in which all youth are engaged in attempting to (1) meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, and be spiritually grounded, and (2) to build skills, and competencies that allow them to function and contribute in their daily lives." (Karen Pittman, 1993). All youth and families need opportunities, supports and quality services to reach their individual and collective capacities. Linking the research of the *Asset Approach* and *Communities That Care* will assist Youth 2000 partners, new and old, in meeting the challenges of planning for all youth and families while attempting to reduce risks where they are high.

Communities That Care: Reducing Problem Behaviors

Communities That Care (CTC) is an operating system that provides research-based tools to help communities promote the positive development of children and youth and prevent adolescent substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout and violence.

CTC is:

Inclusive □ engaging all areas of the community in promoting healthy development.

Proactive □ identifying and addressing priority areas before young people become involved in problem behaviors, targeting early predictors of problems rather than waiting until problems have become entrenched in young people's lives.

Based on rigorous research □ from a variety of fields—sociology, psychology, education, public health, criminology, medicine, and organizational development.

Community-specific □ rather than a "cookie cutter" approach. Each community uses its own data-based profile to craft a comprehensive, long-range plan for strengthening existing resources and filling identified gaps.

(Developmental Research and Programs, Inc., 1998)

Search Institute's Asset Approach

Many factors influence why some young people have successes in life and others have a harder time. Economic circumstances, genetics, trauma, and many other factors play a role. But these factors—which seem difficult, if not impossible, to change—aren't all that matters. Research by Search Institute has identified 40 concrete, positive experiences and qualities—"developmental assets"—that have a tremendous influence on young people's lives.

Research shows that the 40 developmental assets help young people make wise decisions, choose positive paths, and grow up competent, caring and responsible. The assets are grouped into eight categories:

- ☐ Support
- ☐ Empowerment
- ☐ Boundaries and Expectations
- ☐ Constructive Use of Time
- ☐ Commitment to Learning
- ☐ Positive Values
- ☐ Social Competencies

Identifying, developing and supporting the assets of children, youth, families and their communities ensures that programs and services focus on strengths not just deficits. An example of Monroe County's commitment to building strengths is the ***Asset Partners Network***, a collection of community groups from municipalities across the County which are designing and implementing Asset-Building initiatives.

The *Communities That Care* community building risk-focused prevention approach helps to identify factors that place youth and families at risk for problem behaviors. Both *Communities That Care* and the *Asset Approach* stress comprehensive efforts to build assets, resilience and protection through proven research based efforts. Both models require broad-based community participation and rely on a well-researched understanding of a community's resources and needs.

Getting Started! Identifying Initial Priority Focus Areas

Planning for a service system that is responsive, comprehensive, coordinated and based on results must be guided by fundamental principles and sound data:

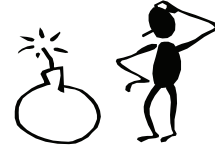
Fundamental Principles

1. All youth need to be given opportunities and support that ensure their stable, healthy development.
2. The continuum of human services must address the full spectrum of youth and family needs: Community Development, Youth Development, Primary Prevention, Early Intervention, Intervention and Treatment.
3. The inter-relatedness of the many issues facing youth and their families requires planning across systems.
4. Planning is not a linear concept nor is it one-dimensional. Rather it is a learning process, a cycle of continuous quality improvement.

Monroe County has a wealth of statistical data with which to identify both its strengths and its needs. The *Youth 2000 Team* reviewed data from multiple sources, including the following, to identify an **initial** set of priority needs:

- **Rochester/Monroe County Community Profile**
- **The Survey of Student Resources and Assets (1998)**
- **Youth Risk Behavior Survey (1998)**
- **PRISMS**

The Team considered the collective ability to impact various risks, the urgency, perception of importance, available resources, overall difficulty and the relative length of time to reduce the risk. After developing consensus the *Youth 2000 Team* identified the following three **initial** Priority Focus Areas to begin the integrated county planning process (it is expected that Priority Focus Areas will shift and expand with continued input from community members and the progression of this multi-year effort).



Early Initiation of Problem Behavior- signifies that the earlier a child begins to exhibit or comes into contact with a problem behavior, the greater the likelihood they will have a problem with these behaviors later on.



Family Conflict and Family Management Problems-these risks signify that in environments where there are no clear expectations of behavior, primary caregivers fail to monitor children, punishments are severe and/or inconsistent, and serious conflicts exist between primary caregivers and between caregivers and children, all of the problem behaviors may surface.



Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization-in all types of communities and neighborhoods where people do not become involved and they do not feel connected drug abuse, juvenile delinquency and violence occur at higher rates.

Next Steps: Utilizing Community Expertise, Identifying Existing Resources and Effective Strategies

Identifying and Assessing Existing Resources

Building strengths and reducing risks in Monroe County children, youth and families will be a complex and complicated effort. Using the experience of individuals and organizations in identifying responses to Priority Focus Areas is a critical first step in identify and assessing existing resources:

- Identify programs and services that are effectively addressing Priority Focus Areas.
- Identify programs and services that are effectively increasing developmental assets and protective factors.
- Identify gaps in programs and services.
- Identify duplication of efforts.

Adapted from Communities That Care Team Handbook, 1997

Identifying Effective Models, Strategies & Programs

In the last twenty-five years policy makers, human services workers, community groups and researchers have increasingly asked if the programs, services and strategies they use actually work. Interest in identifying the most effective efforts has led to research on local, state and national models. The findings of these studies are the basis of a new body of literature across multiple disciplines that describe and highlight “what works” when trying to improve outcomes for children, youth, families and communities. The Youth 2000 Team will draw from the available research and the experience of practitioners and community members as plans are designed to respond to the three initial priority focus areas:

- **Early Initiation of Problem Behavior**
- **Family Conflict and Family Management Problems**
- **Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization**

Utilizing Community Expertise

Phase II of the multi-year *Youth 2000* Plan will utilize the expertise of youth, parents, neighborhood and civic organizations, schools, faith communities and human service providers in each priority focus area. The involvement of youth, parents and other constituencies is critical to plan for a youth and family service system that is responsive, comprehensive, coordinated and based on results.

We Need Your Help To Make This Happen! *Please write down your ideas, comments and suggestions and send them to the contact information provided on the last page:*

Early Initiation of Problem Behavior

Definition of Priority Focus Area

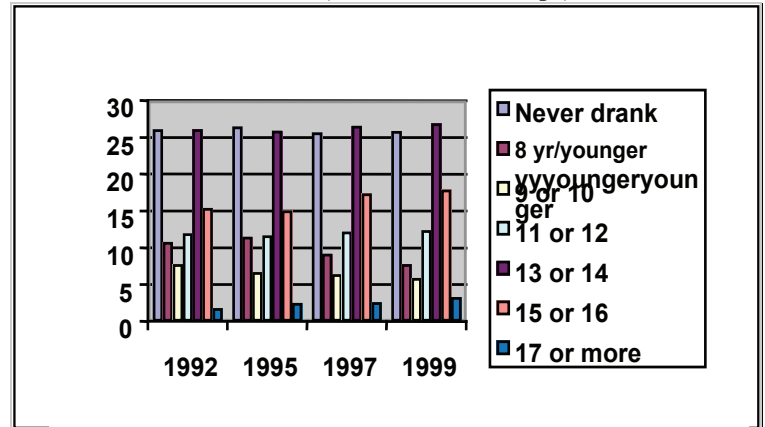
The earlier young people drop out of school, begin using drugs, commit crimes and become sexually active, the greater the likelihood that they will have chronic problems with these behaviors later. For example, the earlier the onset of any drug use, the greater is the probability of the individual's involvement in other drug use, the frequency of use, and their involvement in deviant activities such as crime and selling drugs. Children who begin to use before age 15 are twice as likely to develop problems with drugs than are children who wait until they are older. Waiting until age 19 to try alcohol or other drugs dramatically decreases the risk of drug problems. (DRP, Inc. 1993)

Why focus on reducing risks and building assets when youth are young?

Building assets and resilience in children and youth while reducing the risks they face helps to protect them from problem behaviors. When children are antisocial and aggressive, or start getting involved with drug use or delinquency, for example, they start down a path that makes them more likely to suffer from chronic behavior problems. Helping children, youth and families avoid problem behaviors requires that communities, schools and service providers work together to develop environments, services, and programs that build protection and reduce risk. Like most counties across the country, Monroe County has a majority of youth that exhibit healthy beliefs and behaviors. However, the *Youth 2000 Team's* analysis of risks and assets found too many children and youth initiating substance use, sexual activity and delinquency at an early age. Compounding this is data which suggest that as youth age they have fewer assets to protect themselves from problem behaviors.

The 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) reported of the 51.4% 9th-12th grade students who had tried at least one full cigarette, 77% tried it before the age of 15. Additionally, for the 74.1% of 9th - 12th grade students who have had at least one drink, almost three-fourths had their first drink when they were 14 or younger and over half had their first drink before the age of 12 (Figure 1.1).

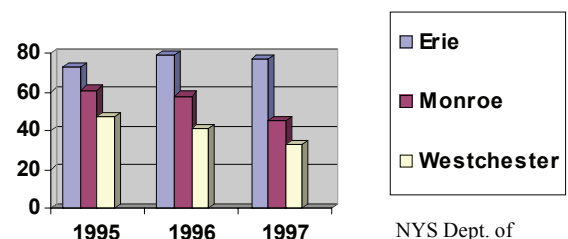
First Drink of Alcohol (other than a few sips)



YRBS, 1999

Additionally, the YRBS found that of the 37.2% of students who reported the age they first had sex, 50% were 14 years and under. Early initiation of sexual behavior places teens at high risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Teen mothers drop-out more than girls who delay childbearing and children born to teen mothers are at a higher risk of poor health and difficulties in school. While the rate of teenage pregnancies is down state and countywide, in 1997 almost 13% of all Monroe County pregnancies were to teens under 19 years. Department of Health data shows that from 1995 through 1997 both Monroe and Westchester counties demonstrated a steady decline in the number of young teens pregnant. (see below). However, Westchester County with a 23% larger population base than Monroe County has consistently had 25% fewer pregnancies in the 10-14 age category. Also, in the same period pregnancies among girls ages 15-19 dropped 2% in Monroe County while Westchester's total dropped more than 16%. Progress is being made but the risk remains.

Total Pregnancies Age 10-14

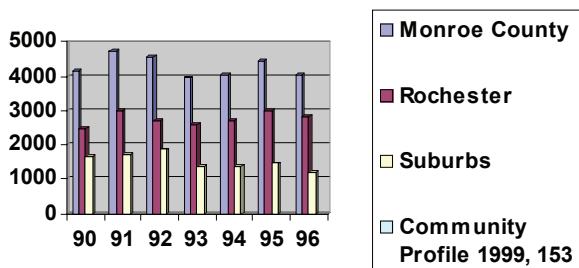


NYS Dept. of Health Profiles

Early Initiation of Problem Behavior

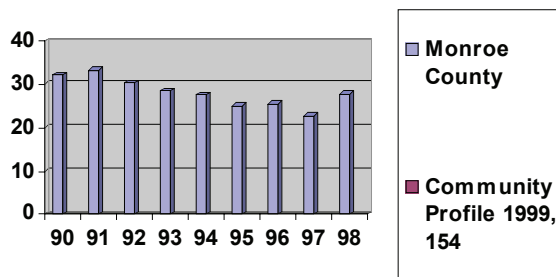
The emergence of delinquent behavior in young children and adolescents “generally takes place in an orderly, progressive fashion, with less serious problem behaviors preceding more serious problems.” (Thornberry, 1998) Early problem behaviors like aggressiveness, defiance of authority, fighting, and substance abuse are often pathways to serious difficulties in adolescence and early adulthood. Few good measures exist that clearly identify trends in youth crimes, delinquency and school suspensions. Available data shows a consistent problem countywide with youth engaging in Part II Crimes (e.g., simple assault, disorderly conduct, sale/use of controlled substance, criminal mischief, stolen property, etc.) Youth with City residence are disproportionately represented.

**Youth Arrests for Part II Crimes,
Ages 10-17**

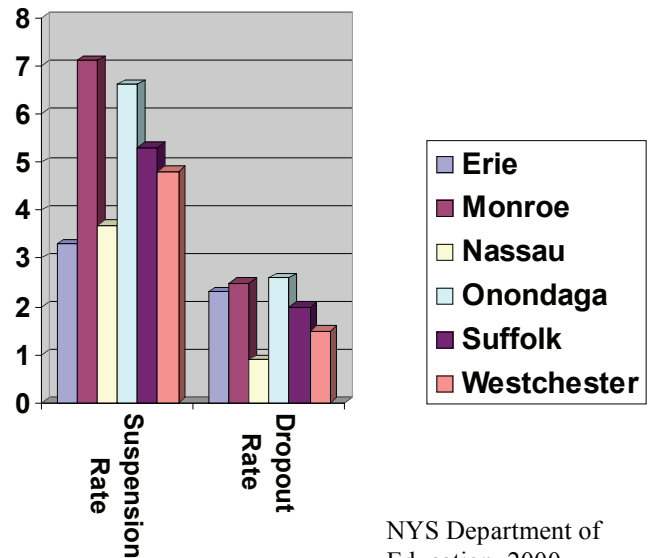


Across Monroe County the rate of Juvenile Delinquency cases opened dropped steadily from 1990 through 1997. Again, City youth were over represented with three times the rate of opened suburban cases. In 1998 the downward trend ceased with a five-point increase. One year's data is insufficient to identify a trend, however, this significant rate increase in problem behavior by adolescents supports the need to focus on the Early Initiation of Problem Behavior.

**Rate Per 1000 Juvenile Delinquency Cases
Opened at Probation Intake, Ages 10-15**



**Suspension & Dropout Rates Similar
Counties 1997**



Other indicators of the onset of behavior problems are school district suspension and dropout rates. School suspension rates vary widely among schools and districts. These differing rates are reflective of different policies and practices across school districts and do not necessarily mean students are behaving better. Schools suspend youth for reasons ranging from defiance of authority and fighting to weapons possession.

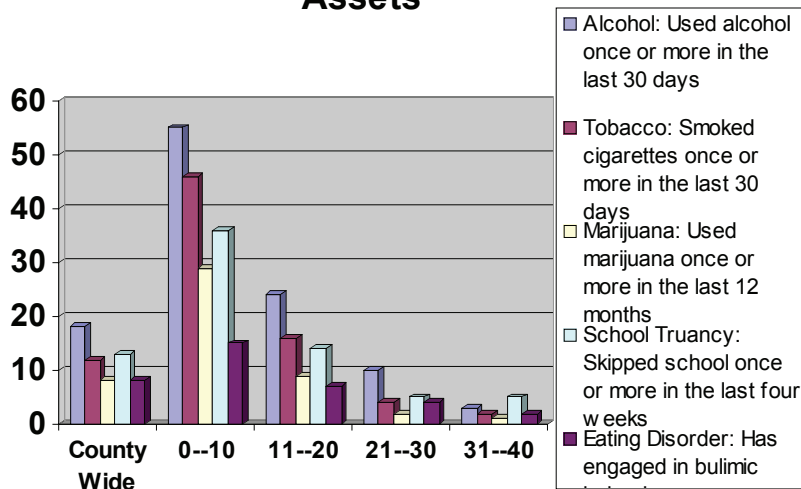
When compared to similar counties Monroe County has the highest suspension rate at 7.1% with Onondaga next at 6.6%. Erie (3.3%) and Westchester counties (4.8%), with school enrollment closest to Monroe County's, reported significantly lower suspension rates. This county comparison raises concern about youth behaviors across Monroe County. All counties, except Nassau, had dropout rates from 1.5% to 2.6%. When comparing suspensions and dropouts a pattern emerges of counties with higher suspension rates having higher dropout rates. The Community Profile reports that since 1993, Monroe County dropout rates have decreased largely as a result of reductions in the Rochester City School District's rate. During the same period suburban school district dropout rates remained stable at approximately 2%.

Early Initiation of Problem Behavior

Correlating Problem Behaviors and Developmental Assets

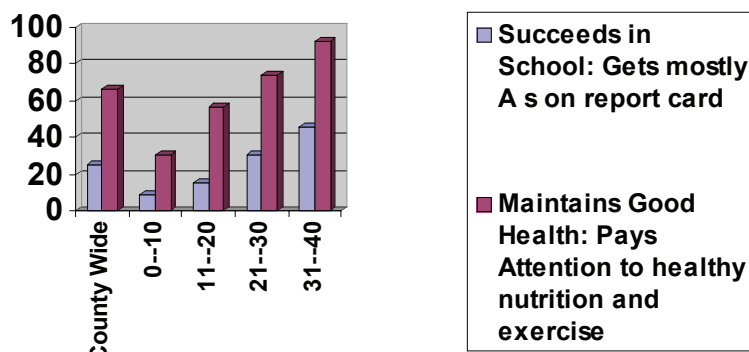
Youth with multiple “assets” are less likely to have chronic problem behaviors. Identifying children and youth with protective assets and those without assists service providers in targeting asset building and risk reduction. For the 10% of middle school youth who have 10 or fewer “assets” (such things as family support, service to others, safety, positive peer influence, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values and social competencies), more than half (55%) have used alcohol in the past 30 days, almost half (46%) have smoked in the last month and 29% have used marijuana in the last year. This group varies in size from community to community -- in one town 17% of middle school students said they had 10 or fewer assets and 60% of that group used alcohol, 48% smoked and 39% had used marijuana at least once in the last year. In another community only 7% were high risk and their risk-taking behavior was less severe although still well above the average for their peers (50% used alcohol, 31% smoked and 22% had experimented with marijuana).

Risk-Taking Behaviors By Number of Assets



The Survey of Student Resources and Assets (1998)

Thriving Indicators By Number of Assets



The Survey of Student Resources and Assets (1998)

The data reviewed by the Youth 2000 Team shows that many Monroe County youth are benefiting and thriving with opportunities and supports, while others are engaging in inappropriate and dangerous behaviors and often are not supported by developmental assets and protective factors. Youth with fewer protective developmental assets are clearly at higher risk. Youth crime, delinquency, substance use, early sexual behavior, suspension and dropout rates provide a glimpse of children and youth engaging in problem behaviors at an early age. The early initiation of these behaviors highlights the need for human services to cooperate with youth, families and educators and other stakeholders in developing effective comprehensive strategies to protect youth from risks and prevent problem behaviors before they happen. The development of comprehensive strategies must be driven by local partners and be flexible enough to support youth at varying degrees of risk.

Early Initiation of Problem Behavior

What are the ranges of strategies or approaches possible?

Just as the entire youth and family service system needs to be responsive, comprehensive, coordinated, and accountable for results so do all efforts to reduce the initiation of problem behaviors and build developmental assets. Programs and services must be family focused and strength based. Specialized efforts must be comprehensive drawing from a multi-disciplinary approach to ensure that the continuum of needs and strengths are supported. Strategies and approaches need to be well coordinated across and within systems. Movement from one service to another should demonstrate a common thread of building assets while focusing on risk behaviors. All efforts must be evaluated based on the results produced and not simply on the number of youth and families served.

The following strategies and approaches have demonstrated positive outcomes in reducing the impact of Early Initiation of Problem Behavior:

- ☐ **Parent Training**
- ☐ **Youth Development**
- ☐ **Parent Involvement**
- ☐ **Social Competence Promotion**
- ☐ **Critical Thinking Skill Development**
- ☐ **School Climate Initiatives**
- ☐ **Classroom Instructional and Organizational Strategies**
- ☐ **Community Mobilization**

Identifying and Assessing Existing Resources

Building strengths and reducing risks in Monroe County children, youth and families will be a complex and complicated effort. Using the experience of individuals and organizations in identifying responses to the **Early Initiation of Problem Behavior** is a critical first step in identifying and assessing existing resources:

- ☐ Identify programs and services that are effectively addressing Early Initiation of Problem Behavior.
- ☐ Identify programs and services that are effectively increasing developmental assets and protective factors.
- ☐ Identify gaps in programs and services.
- ☐ Identify duplication of efforts.

Adapted from Communities That Care Team Handbook, 1997

Next Steps:

- ☐ Establish Work Team
- ☐ Conduct Resource Assessment
- ☐ Identify Effective Models, Strategies and Services

Other Steps? *Please write down your ideas, comments and suggestions and send them to the contact information provided on the last page:*

Family Conflict and Family Management Problems

Definition of Priority Focus Area: Poor family management practices include lack of clear expectations for behavior, failure of parents to monitor their children, and excessively severe or inconsistent punishment. Family conflict includes both persistent, serious conflict between primary caregivers or between caregivers and their children and is a more powerful predictor of problem behaviors in children than family structure. Both poor family management and family conflict increase the risk of drug abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy and dropping out of school. (DRP, Inc. 1993)

Key Indicators:

Student Experiences:

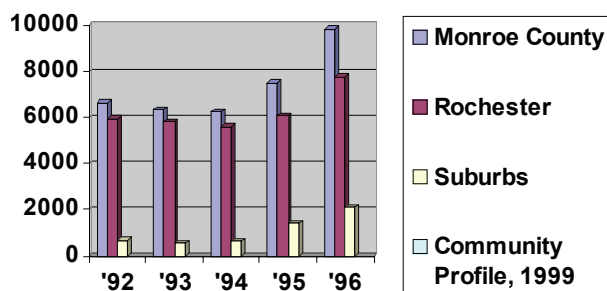
Data compiled by the Search Institute covering a representative sample of Monroe County students indicates that many students lack critical assets:

- Over 40% did not feel that they and their parents communicate positively
- Less than half report that their families provide clear boundaries
- Just over half of middle school students report that their parents help them with homework.
- Less than half say that they feel safe in home/school/neighborhood.

Domestic Conflict:

- Monroe County's rate of divorce is about 10% higher than comparable counties (141.1 per 10,000 currently married vs. 128 for comparable counties).
- Domestic violence increased dramatically between 1992 and 1996.

Reports of Domestic Violence

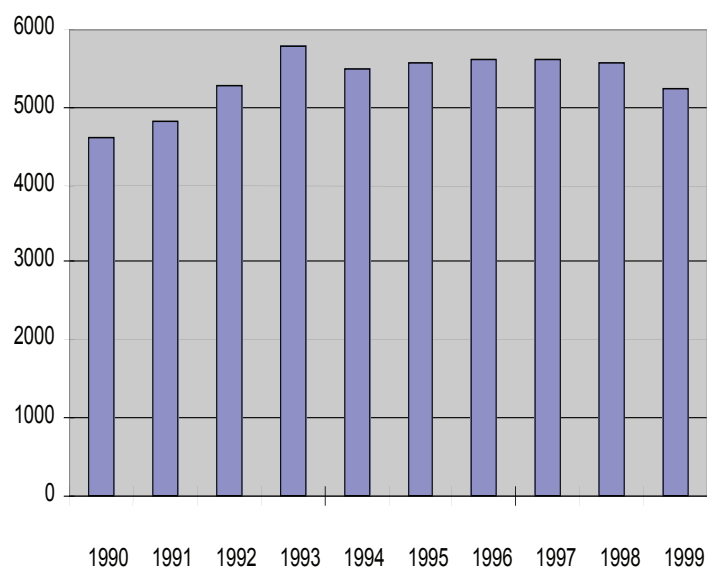


Child Protective Services:

Child protective services reports increased somewhat during the early 90's and have remained relatively stable until 2000 when there is a projected 10% increase.

Of the reports, about 30% are indicated and historically over half of the cases are closed at the time of indication (post 1996 data unavailable). Many of the cases that are unfounded or closed at indication are referred for DSS funded preventive services or community based services.

Number of CPS Reports



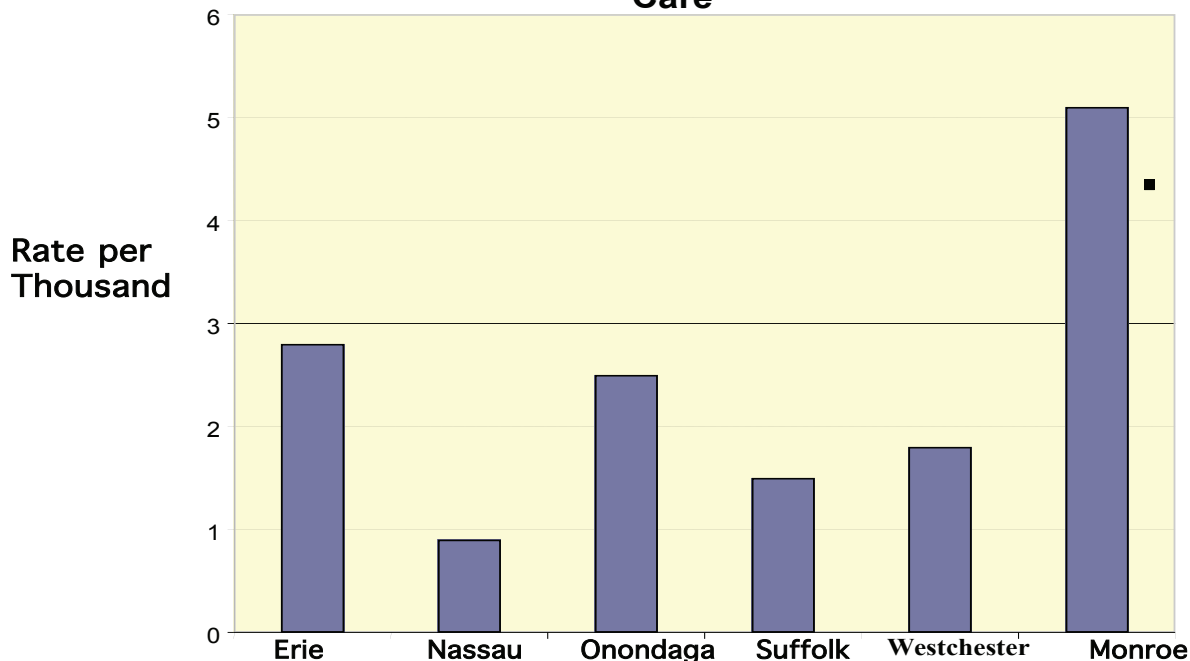
Department of Social
Services, 2000

Out of Home Placement:

At the end of 1999 there were 1,169 children in foster care in Monroe County. While the in-care population has been relatively stable for the last decade, it did increase in 1999 as a consequence of a substantial increase in the number of children admitted to foster care in both 1998 and 1999. This is a sharp contrast with our comparable counties where admission rates have been declining thus bringing down the in-care population. By 1999 our admission rate (per thousand children) was nearly

twice as high as comparable counties (4.0 vs. 2.3) and our in-care rate was nearly 30% higher (6.2 vs. 4.6). Some of these differences are due to more older children being admitted to foster care in Monroe County than in comparable ones. In 1999, 51.8% of the Monroe County foster care admissions were 10 years of age or older; for our comparable counties it was 45.2%. Further, our admission rate for children over 10 is nearly twice as high as the next highest large county (Erie) and five times as high as the lowest one (Nassau).

Children 10--17 Admitted to Foster Care



Children Placed With Relatives or Into the Custody of the Office of Family and Children's Services :

In addition to children in foster care, there are over 200 relative placements, many of which have more than one child where child protective is ordered by family court to supervise the placement. Another 140 children are placed in the custody of the Office of Family and Children's Services.

Runaway and Homeless Youth:

The Runaway and Homeless Youth shelters met 738 requests for shelter in 1997 while an additional 833 requests could not be met for a variety of reasons (403 due to lack of space, 303 because the youth were unwilling to follow up, the rest because they needed services the shelters could not provide).

Family Conflict and Family Management Problems

What's Wrong With this Picture?

Monroe County makes a substantial investment in services for families and children but it is not clear that this investment is producing the desired outcomes.

More specifically:

- Resources are too focused on the “rear end” of the system, especially placement and particularly placement of older children in congregate care facilities. We do not place a higher proportion of children in congregate care facilities than other counties but we do have higher placement rates for them so we end up making more use of these facilities.
- While the community has a wealth of early intervention programs, opportunities for early intervention may be missed. Only about half of the calls to CPS are accepted as reports and 70% of those accepted reports are unfounded. It is unclear to what degree these families are encouraged to find help before their problems become worse. Moreover, given the high placement rates and stable number of Child Protective Reports we need to re-look at these services to insure appropriate targeting and effective service models.
- Coordination among programs at different points along the OCFS Service Continuum appears to work reasonably well on a case-by-case basis but the specialization of practice standards between systems undermines family practice. For example, Child Protective Services and domestic violence programs begin with radically different assumptions that make working together difficult and strained.
- There is an emerging community consensus about the importance of the asset approach (youth) and strength-based service planning (families) but both understanding and implementation are inconsistent between service providers and different types of services.
- The information needed to base preventive program design on research about effective models is available and the Youth Services Quality Council is beginning to try to integrate this knowledge into local practice. Unfortunately, identification and implementation of such programs and strategies has barely begun in foster care.

Family Conflict and Family Management Problems

What are the ranges of strategies or approaches possible?

Just as the entire youth and family service system needs to be responsive, comprehensive, coordinated, and accountable for results so do all efforts to reduce family conflict and build family management techniques. Programs and services must be family focused and strength based. Specialized efforts must be comprehensive drawing from a multidisciplinary approach to ensure that the continuum of needs and strengths are supported. Strategies and approaches need to be well coordinated across and within systems. Movement from one service to another should demonstrate a common thread of building assets while focusing on risk behaviors. All efforts must be evaluated based on the results produced and not simply on the number of youth and families served.

The following strategies and approaches have demonstrated positive outcomes in reducing the impact of Family Conflict and Family Management Problems:

- ☐ **Parent Training**
- ☐ **Prenatal and Infancy Programs**
- ☐ **Early Childhood Education**
- ☐ **Multi-Component Programs**
Based in Schools
- ☐ **Family Therapy Marital Therapy**
- ☐ **Interventions for Children of**
Divorce

Identifying and Assessing Existing Resources

Building strengths and reducing risks in Monroe County children, youth and families will be a complex and complicated effort. Using the experience of individuals and organizations in identifying responses to the **Family Conflict and Family Management Problems** is a critical first step in identifying and assessing existing resources:

- ☐ Identify programs and services that are effectively addressing Early Initiation of Problem Behavior.
- ☐ Identify programs and services that are effectively increasing developmental assets and protective factors.
- ☐ Identify gaps in programs and services.
- ☐ Identify duplication of efforts.

Adapted from Communities That Care Team Handbook, 1997

Next Steps:

- ☐ Establish Work Team
- ☐ Conduct Resource Assessment
- ☐ Identify Effective Models, Strategies and Services

Other Steps? *Please write down your ideas, comments and suggestions and send them to the contact information provided on the last page:*

Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization

Definition of Priority Focus Area

Higher rates of drug problems, juvenile delinquency, and violence occur in communities or neighborhoods where people have little attachment to the community, where people do not become involved with the community, where the rates of vandalism are high and where there is low surveillance of public places. These conditions are not limited to low-income neighborhoods; they can also be found in wealthier neighborhoods.

The less homogenous a community in terms of race, class, religion—and even the mix of industrial and residential areas—the less connected its residents may feel to the overall community, and the more difficult it is to establish clear community goals and identity. The challenge of creating neighborhood attachment and organization is greater in these neighborhoods.

Perhaps the most significant issue affecting community attachment is whether residents feel they can make a difference in their own lives. If the key players in the neighborhood—such as merchants, teachers, police, human and social services personnel—live outside the neighborhood, residents' sense of commitment will be less. Lower rates of voter participation and parental involvement in schools also indicate lower attachment to the community.

(Developmental Research and Programs, Inc. 1993)

developed Neighbors Building Neighborhoods (NBN) efforts, which have been nationally recognized for improving community organization and addressing neighborhood concerns. The Neighbors Building Neighborhoods groups were a key resource in designing Rochester's Renaissance 2010 Plan, a comprehensive community effort designed to transform the city within a vision of Responsibility, Opportunity and Community.



Monroe County residents live in neighborhoods, villages, towns and cities of all shapes and sizes. Many of these communities have long traditions of working together to solve shared problems and address common concerns. A rich tapestry of religious, civic, neighborhood, business, professional and human service associations work for specific goals while building community. Promising efforts include the twelve local *Asset Building* initiatives that are mobilizing communities to implement efforts designed to support the development of strengths in youth and

These community mobilization initiatives along with many others are important examples of how communities are working together to improve outcomes for children, youth and families. Efforts which seek to involve individuals and families in issues which impact them at their homes, schools and places of worship are becoming increasingly critical as local economies change, people move more frequently and substance abuse and violence remain serious problems. The Integrated County Planning process will work with existing efforts to address the Low Neighborhood Attachment and

Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization

The community is the context in which families raise their children. Families of all socioeconomic levels, all cultures and races, in all neighborhoods across the country, must recognize the powerful influence of the community on the development of young people. The community context can increase the risks in young people's lives, or, working hand-in-hand with families, schools and youth-serving organizations, can help create a web of protection for youth.

Developmental Research and Programs, 2000

The New York State Office of Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) has built its data around the *Communities That Care* risk and protection model. OASAS ranks Monroe County 51st out of 55 counties (with 55 being the worst) on the community risk index for drugs, and 26th on the risk index for alcohol. (*PRISM*) In both affluent and economically distressed neighborhoods individuals with substance abuse problems, the availability of drugs and alcohol and the perception of availability all work against the development of healthy youth and connected communities.

Many county youth are living in neighborhoods where they do not feel attached or supported. The Survey of Student Resources and Assets (1998) identified characteristics of communities that protect youth from risk. Nearly half of the middle school youth sampled from Rochester and the suburbs indicated that they do not experience the environment beyond the family as caring. Less than half (45%) said that they had relationships with adults other than their parents, and even fewer (36%) said they had adult role models. When youth feel little attachment to their community they are at higher risk for problem behaviors. The Youth 2000 planning process seeks to build on the existing efforts of multiple communities to support locally driven efforts to mobilize communities in support of building youth and family strengths and reducing risks.

Identifying and Assessing Existing Resources

Building community to protect and support the strengths of youth and families will be a complex and complicated effort. Using the experience of individuals and organizations in identifying responses to the **Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization** is a critical first step in identifying and assessing existing resources:

- Identify initiatives and strategies that are effectively addressing Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization
- Identify initiatives and strategies that are effectively increasing developmental assets and protective factors.
- Identify gaps.
- Identify duplication of efforts.

Adapted from Communities That Care Team Handbook, 1997

Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization

What are the ranges of strategies or approaches possible?

Just as the entire youth and family service system needs to be responsive, comprehensive, coordinated, and accountable for results so do all efforts to build neighborhood attachment and organize community. Efforts, initiatives and strategies should be locally organized and controlled. Strategies and approaches need to be well coordinated and inclusive of diverse community residents. All efforts must be evaluated based on the results produced and not simply on the number of youth and families served.

The following strategies and approaches have demonstrated positive outcomes in reducing the impact of **Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization**:

- ☐ **Community Mobilization**
- ☐ **Community Development**
- ☐ **Youth Development**
- ☐ **Community/School Policies**
- ☐ **Community Policing**

Next Steps:

- ☐ Establish Work Team
- ☐ Conduct Resource Assessment
- ☐ Identify Effective Models, Strategies and Services

Other Steps? *Please write down your ideas, comments and suggestions and send them to the contact information provided on the last page:*

Contact Information & Note Space

Contact Information:

Send or Fax Ideas, Comments, Suggestions To:

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Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau
4160 CityPlace, 50 W. Main Street
Rochester, NY 14614-1238

Phone: 428-4950 **Fax:** 428-9033

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Note Space: